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Editor —

Fred D. Opperman, CGCS
810 Greenwood Avenue
Carpentersville, IL 60110
Phone (708) 428-5009

Fax (708) 669-1013

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President's Message



Ray Schmitz

In my first MAGCS president's message I would like to introduce myself, briefly mention about my background, and give some insight as to my intentions for leadership of this fine professional organization.

After gaining a B.S. degree in agronomy and soils at the University of Wisconsin in 1964 I started working on a small daily fee golf course in Wisconsin and decided that I would like to make this as my career and set as my goal to be a golf course superintendent. The turning point in my career came in 1967 when I came to the Chicago area and went to work for Ed Braunsky Sr. at Hickory Hills Golf Club. After spending the next 12 years between Hickory Hills and Green Garden C.C. I was offered the superintendent's position at Flossmoor Country Club which I have held the past 13 years.

I would like to thank Bruce Williams for his leadership of the MAGCS the past 2 years, he has done a splendid job. I wish Bruce continued success in all future endeavors especially in his campaign for director of the GCSAA in February.

All of the committee chairmanships have been assigned so if someone is interested in serving on a committee please contact me or the chairman of that particular committee. I have established a benevolence committee with Mike Bavier and Dudley Smith as co-chairman. This committee is set up to establish a better channel of communications for reporting illness or death of our present and past members. Also I intend to keep the commercial advisory committee intact. This allows a direct line of communications between the commercial members and the MAGCS board of directors.

Early in 1992 we plan to issue a new membership directory. To assure your name is in this directory pay your dues on time and make sure all information is correct such as name, address, phone, classification, etc.

The MAGCS is sponsoring two workshops at the NCTE held at the Pheasant Run Resort, Monday, Dec. 2nd and Tuesday, Dec. 3rd. I hope we have a good attendance at this Exposition. It is important that we show our support at these informative workshops.

During the holiday season it is time to relax and enjoy our family and friends, let's take advantage of this special season. I sincerely wish all of our members and their loved ones a safe and happy holiday.



“Setting Priorities”

by Steven M. Cook
Superintendent Golf de Joyenval

Director's Column Our Most Important Resource

by Timothy Kelly
Vice President, MAGCS

The Midwest Turf Clinic at Medinah Country Club is recent history. It was very gratifying to see many younger members of our Association in attendance. Several of these members were assistants and other members of our maintenance staffs. The role of these assistants or key staff members is very important at all golf course maintenance operations. Without these key individuals many important maintenance programs and important projects would not be able to be completed. The age of specialization has come to the golf course maintenance staff, my own staff currently consists of: two assistants, a horticulturist, an irrigation technician/supervisor, supervisor/project technician, and a mechanical maintenance supervisor. Many other golf course superintendents utilize key personnel at their operations. Some titles of these positions are: assistant superintendent, supervisor, foreman, head mechanic, maintenance technician, irrigation technician, horticulturist, head gardener, arborist, etc. This list can go on and on, and it would include buzzwords of the day, irrigation technician is a good example.

These individuals are working hard to help us to provide our golfers with the excellent conditions found on golf courses today. Well, many of us have this capable staff surrounding us today. What do we do with these individuals? Hopefully we treat them as we ourselves would want to be treated. What does that entail or require from us? As superintendents we must ensure that these individuals are fairly compensated (with a realistic living wage or salary), receive basic benefits (health insurance, etc.) and have the opportunity to continue their education. Improving their knowledge will benefit them as individuals, as well as, benefitting our golf maintenance operations. This is an investment that will benefit our entire industry.

Some of these individuals will aspire to move ahead some day to their own golf course, as a superintendent. Other individuals however, will remain within their role either at the same golf course or move to another operation. These staff members are our most important resource today. As golf course superintendents, we must strive to treat them as our most precious resource, and not take them for granted. They must be allowed to grow and prosper, just as golf itself is growing and prospering throughout the entire world.

After reading articles by GCSAA Director Bruce Williams, and GCSAA President Stephen Cadenelli, concerning the utilization of our spare time, I couldn't help but compare the French attitude with our own, concerning family and personal time. It seems this advice always surfaces in mid-summer when stress peaks for most Superintendents. But not for the French. This advice will surface at any time day or night, summer or winter, wet or dry. They put family, friends, and the enjoyment of life ahead of all other priorities. In fact there is no other priority. If you ask a French "Intendant de Parcours" whether he will be at the golf course on the coming weekend or in the country with his family, no doubt about it ... he will not be on the first tee. Even those who are single and without a wife and children will be with their parents and friends every chance they get. The point being: they make their chances. None of this "I've got to be at the course today or something will go wrong". Think about it. There are courses here in Europe older than the United States, and they're still there, after all these years, after all those Superintendents, they're still there! Time off or long hours at the course, they're still there. And who knows the difference? Their families and friends know. Oh yes, there are those of us who will say "We are more dedicated than they, more professional, harder working, and American members demand higher quality." This may be true. But after all those years the courses are still there! Still being played. Still being maintained. Still being watered. You won't find too many French Superintendents with a stress problem, unless he's trying to choose a good wine. I'm not saying this outlook is right or wrong, good or bad, but it works for them and after all these years their courses are still there! Most people can't believe it when they discover the hours an American Superintendent works. In France if you work extra hours, you are allowed by law to recuperate those same hours in the off season, which means along with the mandatory 5 weeks of vacation, you may be looking at somewhere around 2 months of rest and relaxation before the next season starts! When they get back ... that's right, the golf course is still there. I think that most of us will always be working those incredible hours. Our drive towards excellence demands it. It's one of the things that makes our country so unique and strong, along with giving us the greatest golf courses in the world. But there must be a middle ground between these two philosophies. There must be a way to find the time. While I personally don't hold to the French idea of "it can wait till tomorrow", I have learned one thing here, and that is that life is short, spare time is important, and the weekends spent traveling are much more memorable than those spent at the golf course. And when I come back Monday morning ... the course is still there!

(Editor's note: This is one of the articles that got lost in the mail with the October issue.)

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In Your Garden Christmas Tree Facts & Figures

According to James A. Fizzell, Horticulturist in Cook County, when you set up and decorate your Christmas tree you will be partaking in a tradition with its origins in antiquity. The Egyptians, Romans, and Druids all used decorated trees in celebrating the winter solstice long before the dawn of Christianity, says Fizzell.

Most historians agree that use of an evergreen tree as part of the Christmas celebration started about 400 years ago in Germany. There is a legend that one Christmas Eve, Martin Luther was journeying through the pine forest. He was inspired by the sight of thousands of stars twinkling through the branches of the trees. When he arrived home, he cut down a fir tree and covered it with small candles so that the children might know what the heavens were like.

The custom was introduced into England when Victoria married German Prince Albert. Victoria commanded that a green tree be brought into the palace each year and decorated for Christmas as it might have been in Albert's homeland. Hessian mercenaries brought the custom to the U.S. during the American Revolution.

Here in Illinois, the first Christmas trees were set up in 1804. Soldiers stationed at Fort Dearborn hauled trees from surrounding woods to their barracks during the Christmas season.

When I was a youngster, remembers Fizzell, most people got their Christmas trees from the forest. Today over 90% of the fresh trees come from Christmas tree plantation, he says.

Growing Christmas trees isn't an easy business. It takes from four to over 12 years for a seedling to mature into a saleable tree. During that time it must be trained, pruned, and protected from many hazards. Trees can suffer from too little or too much sun or rain; destructions by rodents, deer, insects, diseases, hail or fire; or being overgrown by brush, vines or weeds.

While they are growing, Christmas trees provide many environmental benefits. Each acre of trees provides the daily requirements of oxygen for 18 people. The trees serve as wildlife habitat, and stabilize the soil. Often Christmas trees are planted on barren slopes or under power lines where no other crops will grow.

More than 35 million American families will buy natural Christmas trees this year. Nearly 100 million seedlings are planted more than to replace harvested trees. One million acres are now planted each year with Christmas trees in the United States.

The most popular trees nationwide are Scotch pine, Douglas fir, balsam fir, white pine, and Fraser fir.

After the holidays, Christmas trees can be "recycled" in a number of ways. Christmas trees are biodegradable. Branches may be used for cover in the garden. The entire tree may be chipped for mulch. Trees sunk in fish ponds or lakes make excellent refuge and feeding areas.

Or you can use the tree as a bird feeder and wildlife shelter. Hang suet cakes, fruit or popcorn on the branches to attract feathery friends.

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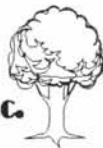
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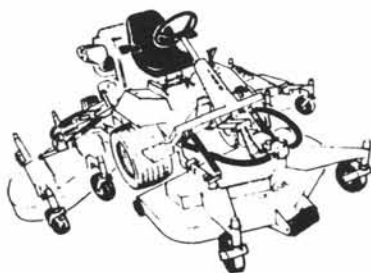


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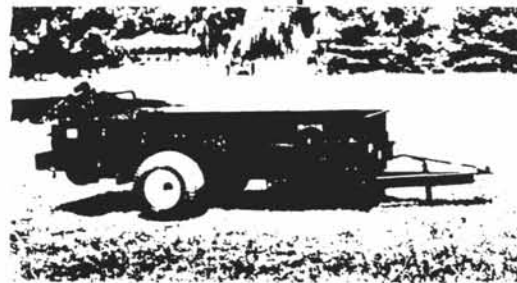
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Leaves, Limbs, Needles and Boughs

by Fred D. Opperman

This month's selection, I haven't seen on too many golf courses. But for those of you who would like to see fine examples of this majestic tree, visit Glen View Club, Ridgemoor C.C. or Westmoreland C.C. These three clubs all have *Taxodium distichum* (taks-o'di-um dis'ti-kum) or commonly known as Baldcypress. This deciduous conifer can be grown in wet areas. You should highly consider the Baldcypress when confronted with what to plant where the area is wet and have a problem in choosing a plant.

Leaves: Spirally arranged on the branchlets, 2-ranked on the deciduous shoots, linear-lanceolate, apiculate, 1/3 to 3/4" long, 1/16 to 1/12" wide, bright yellow green in the spring, soft sage green in summer, rich brown in the fall.

Buds: Alternate, near tip of stem rounded, with overlapping, sharp pointed scales; smaller lateral buds also present and from them leafy budless branches arise which fall in autumn.



Size: 50 to 70' high by 20 to 30' wide, can grow to 100' and more.

Habit: A lofty, deciduous conifer of slender, pyramidal habit, almost columnar in youth, with a stout, straight trunk buttressed at the base and short, horizontal branches, ascending at the ends, the lateral branchlets pendulous; sometimes becoming irregular, flat-topped and picturesque in old age.

Rate: Medium, 50 to 70' high in 30 to 50 years.

Bark: Rather attractive reddish brown, fibrous bark; the trunk becoming strongly buttressed especially in wet areas.

Culture: Transplants readily B&B, or spade truck installed; makes its best growth on deep, fine, sandy loams with plenty of moisture in the surface layers and moderately good drainage; in the wild it is seldom found on such places and occurs primarily in permanent swamps where it forms pure stands. Very adaptable tree to wet, dry and well drained soil conditions; soils should be acid for chlorosis will occur on high pH soils. Exceptionally wind firm and even winds of hurricane force rarely overturn them.

Credit: "Manual of Woody Landscape Plants" by Michael A. Dirr

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Commercial Member Advisory Committee — Results of Membership Survey

- Are Industry Reps doing enough to make you aware of industry advances?
74% replied "Yes"
26% replied "No"
- The average Industry Rep works how many hours per week?
4% replied 20 to 30 hours per week
10% replied 30 to 40 hours per week
50% replied 40 to 50 hours per week
36% replied 50 to 60 hours per week
- The average Industry Rep has an annual income of:
57% replied \$25,000 to \$50,000
33% replied \$50,000 to \$75,000
6% replied \$75,000 to \$100,000
4% replied over \$100,000
- Do you think an Industry Rep should sit on the MAGCS Executive Board as a non-voting member?
65% replied "Yes"
35% replied "No"
- Rank the following occupations in order of credibility and integrity (listed as you rated them).
Superintendents Club Managers
University Professors Club Members
Industry Reps Golf Pro
- The average Industry Rep has reached which education level?
39% replied 2 year college degree
57% replied 4 year college degree
4% replied Masters degree in related field
- Are the majority of your buying decisions influenced by the level of Industry Rep support to the MAGCS?
61% replied "Always"
46% replied "Sometimes"
30% replied "Occasionally"
18% replied "Never"
- Rank the following sources of useful information: (listed as you rated them).
Fellow superintendents
Industry Reps
Trade Journals
Extension & Education Personnel
Conventions
- Are you satisfied with the following aspects of the National Convention Hospitality Room?
a. hours c. food
93% replied "Yes" 91% replied "Yes"
7% replied "No" 9% replied "No"
b. size of room d. accessibility
74% replied "Yes" 88% replied "Yes"
26% replied "No" 12% replied "No"
- Which one of the following would you prefer as it pertains to National Convention Hospitality Rooms?
a. 3 nights, status quo — 74%
b. 1 night, extra special (memorable) — 26%

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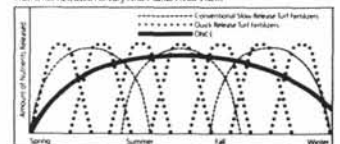
	NUTRALENE	NUTRALENE	NUTRALENE	NUTRALENE	NUTRALENE	NUTRALENE
Release Time Period	12-18 wks	12-18 wks	12-18 wks	12-18 wks	12-18 wks	12-18 wks
Hydrolytic Breakdown	•	•	•	•	•	•
Microbial Breakdown	•	•	•	•	•	•
Non-degradable or resistant to acids in soil for release	•	•	•	•	•	•
Transparency	•	•	•	•	•	•
Low Salt	•	•	•	•	•	•
Proven Leaf-Fertilizing	•	•	•	•	•	•
Proven Water-Soluble	•	•	•	•	•	•

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1991 Index of Articles & Authors

Bruce Williams' President's message appears each month.
Leaves, Limbs, Needles & Boughs is abbreviated
to LLN & B

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